Lack of food processing capacity

† 4122. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA :

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) wheather it is a fact that almost 40 per cent of the production of fruits and vegetables is being spoiled annually due to lack of required capacity of food processing in the country;

(b) if not, the assessment so far been made by Government in this respect;

(c) whether Government have formulated any time-bound action plan to create food processing capacity in order to check the losses thereof; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In 1995, Government of India constituted a Working Group on Post Harvest Management, Marketing and Exports. This Group estimated that post-harvest losses in different crops ranges from 8% to 37%. Further that these losses occur during different States after harvest. The Indian Institute of Horticultural Research has assessed that losses occur at the following stages:—

(i) harvesting and pre-harvesting due to spoilage spillage and trimming.

(ii) transport due to spoilage, bruising, breakage.

(iii) Storage, due to over-ripening or under-ripening, with rain and humidity.

(iv) Processing and packing, due to inefficiency and contamination.

(v) Marketing, due to loss of weight and quality with multi-level handling.

(c) As may be seen from the above, processing of food is only one element to reduce wastage and spoilage of fruits and vegetables. In the past 10 years due to the efforts of the Government, the volume of food processing in the country has increased by almost three times.

(d) The department of Food processing Industries provides concessional finance to establish food processing industries and further provides grants for training of manpower, promotion of R and D dissemination of information and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

knowledge on the field and provides marketing assistance. Food processing sector has also been included as a priority sector for lending by financial institutions.

Preservation of plants and seeds of medicinal value

4123. SHRl RAMACHANDRA KHUNTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any action plan for Central scheme to preserve plants and seeds of medicinal value;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) A Central Sector scheme on Development of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture since the VIII Plan under which plants and seeds of medicinal value are being conserved through the State Agricultural Universities. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is involved in the conservation of medicinal plants through their programmes of (i) All India Coordinated Research Project on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, (ii) National Bureau of Plant Genetic Research, (iii) National Agricultural Technology Project on Plant Biodiversity under Jai Vigyan National Science and Technology Mission and (iv) project funded by Department of Biotechnology on G-15 Genebanks for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.

(c) Does not arise.

Subsidy on ammonium chloride fertilizers

4124. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with Government for the restoration of subsidy on Ammonium Chloride Fertilizer; and

(b) whether Government are taking any action for subsidising the price of ammonia by linking to the average subsidy being recovered from Urea ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Use of subsidised ammonia is permitted for manufacturing urea, which is the only fertiliser at present under price, distribution and movement control.